

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the outstanding Official Action mailed on September 11, 2003, the shortened statutory period for filing a response being set to expire on December 11, 2003. Claims 1-19 are currently pending in the application.

I. Claim Amendments

Applicants have made several claim amendments in order to more clearly define the scope of the present invention. Because there is support in the specification for each of the following claim amendments, Applicants assert that no new matter has been added.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the electronic device has a second connector portion connected to the at least one first connector portion to directly attach the electronic device to the main body.

Claim 11 has been canceled.

Claim 13 has been amended to recite that the electronic device has a second connector portion connected to the at least one first connector portion to directly attach the electronic device to the electronic apparatus.

Claim 18 has been amended to recite that the second connector portion is complementary to the at least one first connector portion so that the second connector portion directly connects to the at least one first connector portion.

Claim 20 has been added to recite an apparatus further comprising another first connector portion in the main body and electrically connected to the circuit; and another electronic device having a second connector portion, the electronic device and the another electronic device being of the same type, the second connector portion of the another electronic device being connected to the another first connector portion to directly

attach the another electronic device to the main body, the at least one first connector portion and the another first connector portion being positioned so that the electronic device and the another electronic device are disposed at geometrically balanced positions on the left and right sides of the electronic apparatus with respect to the user.

Claim 5 has been cancelled, and dependent claims 6 and 7 have been amended to depend from claim 1. Claim 15 has been cancelled, and dependent claim 16 now depends from claim 13.

II. The References Cited By The Examiner Do Not Teach Every Element of Rejected Claims 1, 13 and 18

The Examiner has rejected independent claims 1, 13 and 18, from which all other claims depend, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by European Patent No. 0982663 ("Torii"), or U.S. Patent No. 5,938,770 ("Kim"), or U.S. Patent No. 6,314,379 ("Frederick"). As will be explained herein, the present claim amendments more clearly recite the distinguishing features of the present invention. Accordingly, the aforementioned references do not support the Examiner's anticipation rejections.

Applicants' invention is directed towards an electronic apparatus that also functions as a Universal Serial Bus ("USB") hub, or a similar form, such as a Local Area Network ("LAN"). Applicants' invention teaches that electronic devices are capable of being directly connected to the electronic apparatus in a manner that allows the electronic devices to directly attach to the electronic apparatus. That is, there is no longer a need for intermediate flexible wires, such as cables, to connect the electronic devices to the electronic apparatus.

Applicants note that by including the limitation of direct attachment between the electronic device and electronic

apparatus, this means that there are no intermediate cables between the electronic device and electronic apparatus that would significantly space them apart. This important feature improves upon the overall appearance of a computer system, as there are no longer visible wires connecting the various complementary devices to the USB hub. See specification, ¶28. Additionally, once the complementary electronic devices are connected and attached to the electronic apparatus, setting of the electronic device is not needed and the electronic devices can be visually integrated with the electronic apparatus. See specification, ¶33.

In stark contrast, Torri, Kim, and Frederick do not teach or suggest an external electronic device capable of being directly attached to the main body of an electronic apparatus.

Torri generally teaches a USB hub and display device to which a plurality of computers can be connected. Torri is directed towards permitting a user to easily switch between two computers that are attached to a single display device. Torri does not discuss the display device having a first connecting portion and the computers or other external electronic devices having a second connecting portion that connects to the first connecting portion. Furthermore, Torri does not teach or suggest that the external devices can be directly attached to the display device. In this regard, there is no teaching or suggestion that an electronic device can be directly connected to the display device without the need or use of external cables.

Similarly, Frederick fails to teach or suggest that an electronic apparatus can be directly connected and/or attached to a display. Frederick teaches a universal multi-pin plug and display connector for standardizing signals transmitted between a computer and a display. The connector permits the combination of many types of signals into one connector so that a consumer

may watch TV, use a personal computer, or both at the same time. See Col. 4, lines 51-55. The use of the connector eliminates the need for several cables to carry different and corresponding signals. See Col. 5, lines 65 -67. Indeed, Frederick recites that one of the main advantages of the universal connector is that "only one cable is used between the PC 14 and display 12." Col. 6, lines 405. Accordingly, Frederick fails to teach or suggest a direct connection between an electronic device and an electronic apparatus without the use of a cable. Frederick therefore cannot be used to support the Examiner's rejection.

Kim also fails to teach that an electronic device can be directly connected to an electronic apparatus. Kim is directed toward a computer monitor also serving as a USB port. The monitor enables electronic USB devices externally connected to the computer monitor to operate even when the power supply voltage from the monitor's power supply has been cut off. Additionally, it is able to detect when a power supply voltage to a USB externally connected device is beyond a rated voltage, and to shut off the abnormal amount of voltage to the USB device. Notably, Kim teaches that such USB devices are connected to the computer monitor through the use of "USB cable[s]," and does not teach or suggest that the USB devices can be directly attached to the computer monitor. See Col. 7, lines 1-12; Figure 13. Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments clearly setting forth that the electronic device directly attaches to the electronic apparatus, such as a computer monitor, Kim cannot be used to support the Examiner's § 102(b) rejection.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested

that she telephone Applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which she might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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